

December 11, 1999

Assistant Secretary M. John Berry,  
c/o Document Management Unit  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W., Mailstop 7229  
Washington, D.C. 20240

**RE: Reconciliation Process with and Political Relationship between  
the Nation of Hawaii and the United States of America**

Assistant Secretary Berry and Mr. Van Norman:

My name is James K. Wong and I am the co-founder of the Hawaii National Education Institute (Hawaii-NEI) and a member of the Komomua-Koa Ohana, a family that traces its genealogy to Rapunohuikamoana, Chief of Kohala and his wife, Nahinu. Our last ohana census performed in 1988, estimates our Hawaiian family to consist of an estimated 5000+ members. I have attached a copy of my genealogy for your perusal.

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1999, I was duly elected as a delegate from the Koolaupoko Moku to the AHA HAWAII 'O'IWI to propose a Hawaiian Government that shall be ratified by the Hawaiian community. I make this special appearance before this commission not as a delegate but an individual, representing the views of the majority of my ohana and members of Hawaii-NEI. Thus, I make the following statements, reserving all questions of jurisdiction for an as yet unidentified independent impartial political body.

In addition, the submission of this statement should not be misconstrued as a concession to the commission or to its authorizing body as possessing the proper authority to dispense the question of reconciliation for the historical and contemporary wrongs committed against the government of the Nation of Hawaii and the Hawaiian people or of the Hawaiian nationals. The question of U.S. delinquency in Hawaii and of the remedy appropriate to such injuries is a matter not confined to the purview of this commission or of the U.S. government but is a matter of international import as seen through the perspective of international standards of conduct.

**THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS AND P.L. 103-150, THE APOLOGY RESOLUTION**

Six years have passed since the above Resolution was signed by the United States and one has to wonder why it took so long before Senator Daniel K. Akaka requested the Department of Justice and the Department of Interior to initiate efforts of reconciliation between the federal government and Hawaiians and their prospective political entity. (See attached letter of Senator Akaka dated November 8, 1999.)

Most of my family members have concluded that this request by the Senator was initiated after the United States Supreme Court decided in March of 1999 to hear the Rice Vs Cayetano case. As you know, oral arguments were held on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1999 and the Supreme Court is now considering it's decision on this most important issue. I submit, that if Harold Rice did not sue the State of Hawaii, reconciliation efforts would have been swept under the carpet and would diminish after the Presidential elections of November 2000.

Your efforts for a reconciliation process has been touted as "a window of opportunity" for Hawaiians to receive millions of dollars as settlement for the wrong doings of the United States provided that agreement is reached before President Clinton leaves office.

Most Hawaiians understand now, that the Apology Resolution reinforced our belief that we Hawaiians never relinquished our right to our major sovereign nation and that the disclaimer in the Resolution opened the door to a process of settlement. Hawaiians also understand that any settlement process will be conducted on a government to government basis. An in-depth analysis of the Apology Resolution by most of my family, friends and fellow delegates have led us to believe that Hawaiians must take action to reestablish it's political entity and economic base that was overthrown in 1893 by the United States. This HAWAIIAN INITIATED RECONCILIATION PROCESS began on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1999 when delegates were elected to propose a Hawaiian government. The reconciliation process alluded to by Senator Akaka is perceived by most Hawaiians as an American initiative with an American agenda. Any resources expended by the United States should be towards assisting Hawaiians in their process.

### POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP

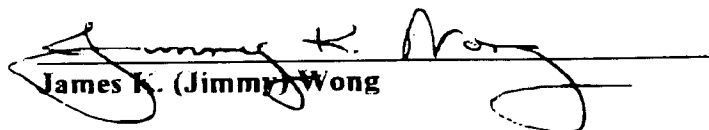
The most crucial issue faced by Hawaiians and delegates to the AHA HAWAII 'O IWI is the question of political status. Does the Hawaiian community prefer to reestablish it's nation as a major independent sovereign nation or a nation within a Nation, similar to the American Indian's political relationship with the United States? Why would Hawaiians surrender its political status as a sovereign nation and relegate it's government to a tribal status under the jurisdiction of the United States' Constitution and Supreme Court? Are the present federal entitlement programs on Native Hawaiian housing, health, education, culture, economic development, land and natural resources carrots or bait to entice the Hawaiians into accepting the nation within a Nation idea? These are the questions most frequently asked by family, friends and fellow delegates.

When the Hawaiian community decides on its political status, and other issues concerning it's political entity, the question of how Hawaiians relate to the global community in general as well as the United States in particular will be resolved. Until then, hearings on a reconciliation process sponsored by the United States is at best premature. It is my personal opinion the proper parties to conduct such a process in the future, would not include the U. S. Department of Interior.

### SUMMARY

The Hawaiian community has initiated a reconciliation process that includes the ratification of a constitution and the implementation of such a document. Presently, discussion has focused on political status and it's ramifications on the Hawaiian community. Numerous polls, surveys and discussions among family, friends, and Delegates, suggest that these Hawaiians would favor reestablishing an independent political entity, republic in form that adheres to democratic principles. The concept of shared management of assets and resources between the Hawaiian Nation and the State of Hawaii is highly acceptable. Maintaining an independent political status with other nations including the United States is highly desirable. A model of such a relationship is presently being discussed among family, friends and Delegates and is attached for review. Finally, any resources expended by the United States should be towards assisting the Hawaiian community in selecting an appropriate model that will ensure their survival ... forever.

Mahalo for allowing me to present my views on this historic concern.

  
James K. (Jimmy) Wong